

S.D., W.Va. 15-mile races join forces

The Jack 15 road race and the Charleston Distance Run, the only 15-mile road races in America, are joining arms to honor runners who complete both events. The 15-15 promotion has been created at the instigation of the only one to have run both events—Dennis Brady.

Brady, who grew up in Mitchell, first ran the Jack 15 in 1979 at age 30 when living in Charleston, W. Va., where he currently lives. In 2023, he convinced two grandnephews to join him on his second Jack 15 journey. In 2024, Brady was joined by his daughter and he stirred up quite a bit of interest in Charleston.

Charleston Distance Run promotes itself as America's 15-miler, but Brady told race organizers and running buddies that there is another 15-miler halfway across the country.

A pied piper of running, Brady generated interest among his Charleston buddies in coming out to South Dakota for the Sept. 20 Jack 15. Organizers of the two races discussed a way to recognize those who complete both 15-milers. The answer is a two-sided coin with the Jack 15 logo on one side and the Charleston Distance Run logo on the other side.

Credit for that goes to Todd Quigley, a member of the Charleston Distance Run committee who crafted several coin prototypes and located the coin supplier.

Carol Phipps Haid, director of the Charleston Distance Run, and Dave Graves, director of the Jack 15, are thankful for Brady's role in bringing together these historic races. Aug. 30 will be the 52nd running of the Charleston Distance Run while Sept. 20 will be the 63rd running of the Jack 15.

With this being the first year of the partnership, the initial commemorative coins will be awarded in Brookings. However, participants don't have to run the races in the same year; they just need to complete both 15-milers.

Graves said, "Many runners use races as a good excuse to travel. This is a great opportunity for Midwest runners to capture the beautiful hills, scenic Kanawha River and the sights of West Virginia's Capitol. In turn, our friends from the East can soak in the idyllic pasturelands and farm fields in the 15.2 miles from White to the South Dakota State University campus."

To date, the Jack 15 already has six West Virginia runners entered and Brady has not yet entered. He said, "I am excited to have that many folks ready to check out what I have been telling them about the Jack 15. Hopefully, a few more will sign on in the months to come."

Haid said, "It's rare to see a South Dakotan in the Charleston Distance Run, but we hope that changes in 2025 and the years to follow."

The Charleston Distance Run is always on the Saturday of Labor Day weekend. The Jack 15 is the third or fourth Saturday of September. Both events also have a relay division. The Charleston Distance Run also has a 5K.

For more information on the Charleston Distance Run, go to:

charlestdistancerun.com

For more information on the Jack 15, go to: www.prairiestriders.net/jack-15.html

Outline:

Both sides of the commemorative coin to be given runners who complete both of America's lone 15-mile runs—the Jack 15 and the Charleston Distance Run.